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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/816,645	04/02/2004	Michael D. Pashley	US000386A	1083
24737 7590 12/20/2007 PHILIPS INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY & STANDARDS P.O. BOX 3001 BRIARCLIFF MANOR, NY 10510			EXAMINER NEGRON, ISMAEL	
			ART UNIT 2885	PAPER NUMBER
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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/816,645

Applicant(s)

PASHLEY ET AL.

Examiner

Ismael Negron

Art Unit

2885

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 02 October 2007.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 19-42 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 19-42 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 02 October 2007 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

1. Applicant's amendment filed on October 2, 2007 has been entered. No claim has been amended, cancelled, or added. Claims 19-42 are still pending in this application, with claims 19 and 37-39 being independent.

Drawings

2. The drawings were received on October 2, 2007. These drawings are not acceptable.

3. The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the reflective out coupling material having an angular width that varies along a length of the rod (as recited in newly added Claim 39), must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claims. No new matter should be entered.

4. Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement-drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement

sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 19-30, 37 and 38 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over MASUTANI et al. (U.S. Pat. 6,488,397) in view of HASSLER, Jr. (U.S. Pat. 4,954,931).

6. MASUTANI et al. discloses a side-emitting device having:

- **a light source (as recited in claims 19 and 38),** Figure 1,
reference number 3;

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- **a light transmitting rod (as recited in claims 19 and 38), Figure 1, reference number 4;**
- **the rod permitting substantially total internal reflection (as recited in claims 19 and 38), column 2, lines 60-63;**
- **a reflective outcoupling material (as recited in claims 19 and 38), Figure 2, reference number 5;**
- **the outcoupling material being affixed to the outer surface of the rod (as recited in claims 19 and 38), column 2, lines 56-59;**
- **the width of the outcoupling material controlling the angular distribution of light leaving the side of the rod (as recited in claims 19 and 38), column 2, lines 16-22;**
- **the light source including a plurality of LED (as recited in Claim 20), column 4, lines 1-3;**
- **the plurality of LED including at least a red, a green and a blue LED (as recited in Claim 21), column 4, lines 16-18;**
- **the red, green and blue LED being mixed to generate white light (as recited in Claim 21), as evidenced by column 4, lines 12-18;**
- **the red, green and blue LEDs being mixed to generate white light chromaticity (as recited in Claim 22), as evidenced by column 4, lines 12-18;**

- **the red, green and blue LEDs being mixed to generate dynamic color effects (as recited in Claim 23), as evidenced by column 4, lines 12-18;**
- **the rod being a flexible rod (as recited in Claim 24), column 2 and 3, lines 60-67 and 1-5, respectively;**
- **the rod being a rigid rod (as recited in Claim 25), column 2 and 3, lines 60-67 and 1-5, respectively;**
- **the outcoupling material being a paint (as recited in Claim 26), column 3, line 6;**
- **the paint being white paint (as recited in Claim 27), column 3, lines 6-8;**
- **the white paint being distributed in such a way as to control the angular distribution of the light leaving the rod (as recited in Claim 28), as evidenced by column 3, lines 38-45;**
- **the white paint being distributed in such a way as to ensure uniform light distribution along the length of the rod (as recited in Claim 29), as evidenced by column 3, lines 38-45; and**
- **an elliptical rod (as recited in Claim 30), as seen in Figure 2.**

7. MASUTANI et al. discloses all the limitations of the claims, except the outcoupling material being distributed along an angular width in such a way as to ensure uniform light distribution along the length of the rod (as recited in claims 19 and 38).

8. HASSLER, Jr. discloses a side-illuminating device having:

- **a light source (as recited in claims 19 and 38), Figure 3, reference numbers 17 and 19;**
- **a light transmitting rod (as recited in claims 19 and 38), Figure 1, reference number 13;**
- **the rod permitting substantially total internal reflection (as recited in claims 19 and 38), as evidenced by column 2, lines 64-69;**
- **an outcoupling portion (as recited in claims 19 and 38), Figure 3, reference number 59;**
- **the outcoupling portion being formed on the outer surface of the rod (as recited in claims 19 and 38), column 3, lines 16-18;**
- **the width of the outcoupling portion controlling the angular distribution of light leaving the side of the rod (as recited in claims 19 and 38), inherent;**
- **the width of the outcoupling portion being determined to ensure uniform light distribution along the length of the rod (as recited in claims 19 and 38), column 3, lines 36-39.**

9. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the claimed invention was made to adjust the angular width of the outcoupling material of MASUTANI et al. to ensure uniform light distribution along the length of the rod, as per the teachings of HASSLER, Jr. (column 3, lines 36-39).

10. Method Claim 37 is suggested by the combined teachings of MASUTANI et al. and HASSLER, Jr. (as detailed in previous sections 6-9).

11. Claims 31-33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over MASUTANI et al. (U.S. Pat. 6,488,397) in view of HASSLER, Jr. (U.S. Pat. 4,954,931).

12. MASUTANI et al. and HASSLER, Jr. individually disclose, or suggest when combined (see previous sections 6-9), all the limitations of the claims, except:

- the rod being a square rod (as recited in Claim 31);
- the rod being having combination of square and curve edges (as recited in Claim 32); and
- the combination of square and curve edges varying along the length of the rod (as recited in Claim 33).

13. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the claimed invention was made to shape the rod of the device of MASUTANI et al. and HASSLER, Jr. as a square rod (as recited in Claim 31), or as a rod having combination of square and curve edges (as recited in Claim 32), such combination of edges varying along the length of the rod (as recited in Claim 33), since it has been held by the courts that a change in shape or configuration, without any criticality, is nothing more than one of numerous shapes that one of ordinary skill in the art will find obvious to provide based on the suitability for the intended final application. See *In re Dailey*, 149 USPQ

47 (CCPA 1976). In this case, one of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to select a specific shape as necessitated by the particular requirements of a specific application, as admitted by the applicant (see pages 5 and 6, lines 19-24 and 1-4, respectively).

14. Claim 34 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over MASUTANI et al. (U.S. Pat. 6,488,397) in view of HASSLER, Jr. (U.S. Pat. 4,954,931), as applied to claim 19 above, further in view of ASHALL (U.S. Pat. 5,390,436).

15. MASUTANI et al. and HASSLER, JR. individually disclose, or suggest when combined (see previous sections 6-9), all the limitations of the claims, except the outcoupling material including a combination of white paint and fine dots with varying packing density (as recited in Claim 34).

16. ASHALL discloses a side-emitting panel having:

- **a light source (as recited in Claim 19)**, Figure 1, reference number 21;
- **a light transmitting panel**, Figure 1, reference number 10;
- **the panel permitting substantially total internal reflection (as recited in Claim 19)**, as evidenced by Figure 1;
- **an outcoupling material (as recited in Claim 19)**, Figure 1, reference number 13;

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- **the outcoupling material being affixed to the outer surface of the panel (as recited in Claim 19), column 3, lines 15-17;**
- **the outcoupling material including a combination of white paint and fine dots (as recited in Claim 34), column 3, lines 56-59; and**
- **the combination of white paint and fine dots having a varying packing density (as recited in Claim 34), column 3, lines 59 and 60.**

17. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the claimed invention was made to include a combination of white paint and fine dots with varying packing density (as recited in Claim 34) as the outcoupling material of the device of MASUTANI et al. and HASSLER, Jr., to be able to enhance uniform light emission from the side of the rod, as per the teachings of ASHALL.

18. Claims 35 and 36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over MASUTANI et al. (U.S. Pat. 6,488,397) in view of HASSLER, Jr. (U.S. Pat. 4,954,931), as applied to claim 19 above, further in view of REID et al. (U.S. Pat. 6,267,492).

19. MASUTANI et al. and HASSLER, Jr. individually disclose, or suggest when combined (see previous sections 6-9), all the limitations of the claims, except a mirror

located at the end of the rod away from the light source (as recited in Claim 35), such mirror reflecting light that travels the entire length of the rod (as recited in Claim 36).

20. REID et al. discloses a side-emitting device having:

- **a light source (as recited in Claim 19), Figure 1, reference number 10;**
- **a light transmitting rod (as recited in Claim 19), Figure 1, reference number 20;**
- **the rod permitting substantially total internal reflection (as recited in Claim 19), column 5, lines 36-43;**
- **an outcoupling material (as recited in Claim 19), Figure 3B, reference number 226;**
- **the outcoupling material being affixed to the outer surface of the rod (as recited in Claim 19), column 6, lines 33-36; and**
- **a mirror (as recited in Claim 35), Figure 6A, reference number 626;**
- **the mirror being located at the end of the rod away from the light source (as recited in Claim 35), column 9, lines 50 and 51; and**
- **the mirror reflecting light that travels the entire length of the rod (as recited in Claim 36), column 9, lines 50-54.**

21. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the claimed invention was made to include the end mirror of REID et al. in the rod of the

device of MASUTANI et al. and HASSLER, Jr., to be able to reflect back along the rod light that traveled the entire length of the rod, as per the teachings of REID et al.

22. Claims 39-42 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over MASUTANI et al. (U.S. Pat. 6,488,397) in view of YOKOYAMA (U.S. Pat. 5,134,549).

23. MASUTANI et al. discloses a side-emitting device having:

- **a light source (as recited in Claim 39), Figure 1, reference number 3;**
- **a light transmitting rod (as recited in Claim 39), Figure 1, reference number 4;**
- **the rod permitting substantially total internal reflection (as recited in Claim 39), column 2, lines 60-63;**
- **a reflective outcoupling material (as recited in Claim 39), Figure 2, reference number 5;**
- **the outcoupling material being affixed to the outer surface of the rod (as recited in Claim 39), column 2, lines 56-59; and**
- **the outcoupling material controlling the angular distribution of light leaving the side of the rod (as recited in Claim 39), column 2, lines 16-22; and**
- **the outcoupling material including fine dots with varying packing density (as recited in Claim 42), column 3, lines 6-22.**

24. MASUTANI et al. discloses all the limitations of the claims, except:

- the angular width of the reflective outcoupling material varying along the length of the rod (as recited in Claim 39);
- the reflective outcoupling material being distributed in a series of stripes perpendicular to the length of the rod (as recited in Claim 39);
- at least one of the width of the spacing between the stripes or the width of the stripes varying along the length of the rod (as recited in Claim 40); or
- the width of the spacing between the stripes varying along the length of the rod (as recited in Claim 41).

25. YOKOYAMA discloses a side-emitting device having:

- **a light source (as recited in Claim 39), Figure 11, reference number 1;**
- **a light transmitting member (as recited in Claim 39), Figure 11, reference number 2;**
- **the member permitting substantially total internal reflection (as recited in Claim 39), column 1, lines 20-25;**
- **a reflective outcoupling material (as recited in Claim 39), Figure 11, reference number 6;**
- **the outcoupling material being affixed to the outer surface of the member (as recited in Claim 39), column 3, lines 63-68;**

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- **the outcoupling material controlling the angular distribution of light leaving the side of the member (as recited in Claim 39), column 4, lines 5-10;**
- **the angular width of the reflective outcoupling material varying along the length of the rod (as recited in Claim 39), as seen in Figure 19;**
- **the reflective outcoupling material being distributed in a series of stripes perpendicular to the length of the rod (as recited in Claim 39), as seen in Figure 19;**
- **at least one of the width of the spacing between the stripes or the width of the stripes varying along the length of the rod (as recited in Claim 40), as seen in figures 11 and 19; and**
- **the width of the spacing between the stripes varying along the length of the rod (as recited in Claim 41), as seen in figures 11 and 19.**

26. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the claimed invention was made to form the outcoupling material of MASUTANI et al. as the variable density stripes of YOKOYAMA, to ensure uniform light distribution along the length of the rod, as per the teachings of YOKOYAMA.

Response to Arguments

27. Applicant's arguments filed October 2, 2007 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

28. Regarding the Examiner's rejection of claims 19, 37 and 38 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over MASUTANI et al. (U.S. Pat. 6,488,397) in view of HASSLER, Jr. (U.S. Pat. 4,954,931), the applicant argues that the cited references fail to individually disclose, or suggest in combination, all the features of the claimed invention, specifically the width of the reflective outcoupling material varying along a length of the rod. The applicant further argues that HASSLER fails to provide motivation for adjusting the reflective layer of MASUTANI et al. in the claimed manner, since the outcoupling surface of HASSLER uses different means for coupling light out of the transmissive rod. Even further, the applicant argues that the Examiner used improper hindsight in reconstructing the claimed invention, since nowhere in the prior art made of record is the claimed structure disclosed or suggested.

29. Regarding the Examiner's rejection of claims 31-33 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over MASUTANI et al. (U.S. Pat. 6,488,397) in view of HASSLER, Jr. (U.S. Pat. 4,954,931), the applicant argues that the cited references fail to individually disclose, or suggest in combination, all the features of the claimed invention, specifically the rod being shaped a square rod (as recited in Claim 31), or having combination of square and curve edges (as recited in Claim 32), such combination of edges varying along the length of the rod (as recited in Claim 33). The applicant further

argues that the claimed shapes are not merely a design choice as such shapes are critical to some aspects of the instant invention.

30. Regarding the Examiner's rejection of claims 20-30 and 34-36, the applicant present no arguments, except stating that such claims depend directly or indirectly from independent claim 19 and would be allowable when/if the independent claim is allowed.

31. In response to applicant's argument that the combination of MASUTANI et al. (U.S. Pat. 6,488,397) and HASSLER, Jr. (U.S. Pat. 4,954,931) fails to suggest the width of the reflective outcoupling material varying along a length of the rod, the applicant is once again strongly advised that the test for obviousness is not whether the features of a secondary reference may be bodily incorporated into the structure of the primary reference; nor is it that the claimed invention must be expressly suggested in any one or all of the references. Rather, the test is what the combined teachings of the references would have suggested to those of ordinary skill in the art. See *In re Keller*, 642 F.2d 413, 208 USPQ 871 (CCPA 1981).

In this case, as previously detailed (see, for example, section 6 of the instant Office Action), MASUTANI et al. discloses a light source 3 and a light transmitting rod 4, such rod 4 permitting substantial total internal reflection of light emitted by the light source 3 into an end of the rod 4. Light transmitting rod 4 features a reflective outcoupling material 5 affixed to the outer surface, the width of such outcoupling material controlling the distribution of light leaving the rod (see column 2, lines 22).

MASUTANI et al. fails to disclose varying the width of the reflective outcoupling material 5. On the other hand, HASSLER, Jr. discloses a diffusive surface 59 for outcoupling light from the light sources 17, 19 from the light transmitting rod 13. The diffusive outcoupling surface of HASSLER, Jr. features a width which varies along the length of the rod 13 to ensure uniform light distribution along the rod 13.

The outcoupling means are indeed different, as argued by the applicant; however, the rejection of the cited claims is not based on incorporation of the diffusive outcoupling surface of HASSLER, Jr. into the patented structure of MASUTANI et al, but in what the teachings of HASSLER, Jr. (i.e. varying the width of outcoupling portion to assure uniform light distribution along the rod) would have motivated one of ordinary skill to do. Varying the width of the reflective outcoupling material 5 of MASUTANI et al. would have flown naturally to one of ordinary skill in the art in light of HASSLER, Jr., to achieve uniform light distribution along the rod 4.

32. In response to applicant's argument that HASSLER fails to provide motivation for adjusting the reflective layer of MASUTANI et al. in the claimed manner (as the outcoupling surface of HASSLER uses different means for coupling light out of the transmissive rod), the applicant is once again strongly advised that suggestion or motivation to modify a prior art structure can be found in a reference, or reasoned from common knowledge in the art, scientific principles, art recognized equivalents, or legal precedent. See *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 USPQ2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988) and *In re Jones*, 958 F.2d 347, 21 USPQ2d 1941 (Fed. Cir. 1992). Also see MPEP § 2144.

In this case, as previously discussed, varying the width of the reflective outcoupling material 5 of MASUTANI et al. would have flown naturally to one of ordinary skill in the art in light of HASSLER, Jr., to achieve uniform light distribution along the rod 4.

33. In response to applicant's argument that the examiner's conclusion of obviousness is based upon improper hindsight reasoning, it must be recognized that any judgment on obviousness is in a sense necessarily a reconstruction based upon hindsight reasoning. But so long as it takes into account only knowledge which was within the level of ordinary skill at the time the claimed invention was made, and does not include knowledge gleaned only from the applicant's disclosure, such a reconstruction is proper. See *In re McLaughlin*, 443 F.2d 1392, 170 USPQ 209 (CCPA 1971).

Once again, varying the width of the reflective outcoupling material 5 of MASUTANI et al. would have flown naturally to one of ordinary skill in the art in light of HASSLER, Jr., to achieve uniform light distribution along the rod 4.

34. In response to applicant's argument that the combination of MASUTANI et al. (U.S. Pat. 6,488,397) and HASSLER, Jr. (U.S. Pat. 4,954,931) fails to suggest a rod shaped as recited in claims 31-33 and that such shapes are not merely a design choice as such shapes are critical to some aspects of the instant invention, the applicant is

strongly advised that such arguments fly in the face of the instant specification as originally filed.

It is noted that the instant specification as originally filed provides no details whatsoever as to how such different shaped might *"allow further control of the output distribution, permitting an inexpensive customization of distinct illumination products"*, such lack of disclosure strongly suggesting that such knowledge is within that of one of ordinary skill in the art. The characterization of such different shapes as "generalizations" further suggests their non-critical nature. In addition, it appears that the applicant himself was not even sure of what such "critical" shapes might be, as evidenced by applicants previous arguments as to what actually constituted a drawing of the claimed shapes (see previous arguments in response to the objections to the drawings).

Conclusion

35. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

36. A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any

extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

37. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ismael Negrón whose telephone number is (571) 272-2376. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 9:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jong-Suk (James) Lee, can be reached on (571) 272-7044. The facsimile machine number for the Art Group is (571) 273-8300.

38. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, go to <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) toll-free at 866-217-9197.

/Ismael Negrón/
Examiner
AU 2885